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ABSTRACT

An examination was made into cohesion in expository essays written in Malay and in English as a Second Language (ESL) by Malaysian writers. T-tests performed on the data obtained from a cohesion analysis of text indicated no differences in the amount of cohesion between good and weak compositions written in Malay by native speakers (n=20), or in English by native speakers (n=20) and Malay speakers. Good compositions written in Malay were found to have more intersentence semantic ties (e.g., reiteration and collection) than weak compositions. However, good compositions written in English by native speakers have more intersentence syntactic ties (e.g., reference and conjunction) than weak compositions. The development of content in the compositions written in Malay, in comparison to those written in English by native speakers, indicates a cross cultural variance in conditions for quality. Appended materials include questions asked of all three groups of teachers, topics for conversation written in Malay and English, and abstracts of example compositions. (Author/GLR)

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COHESION AND COHERENCE IN COMPOSITIONS IN MALAY AND IN ENGLISH

Cohesion in essays written in Malay and in English by native speakers of both languages and in English by Malaysian subjects was examined in this study. Sample compositions evaluated holistically as "good" or "weak" in quality were submitted by Malaysian and American teachers. T-tests performed on the data obtained from an analysis of text indicate no differences in the amount of cohesion between "good" and "weak" compositions written in Malay by native speakers (20) and in English by native (20) or Malay (20) speakers. These results seem to imply that judgments of writing quality depend on overall coherence in content and organization rather than on the quantity of cohesion in structure. "Good" compositions written in Malay have more intersentence semantic ties (e.g., reiteration and collocation) than "weak" compositions. However, "good" compositions written in English by native speakers have more intersentence syntactic ties (e.g., reference and conjunction) than "weak" compositions. The organization of content in the compositions written in Malay in comparison to those written in English by native speakers indicate crosscultural differences. Moreover, compositions written in English by the Malay speakers demonstrate a developmental stage in the organization of material and the use of syntactic cohesive links, reflecting previous writing experience in the Malay language.

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COHESION AND COHERENCE IN COMPOSITIONS IN MALAY AND IN ENGLISH

The relationship between cohesion and coherence in a text has been an interesting question to researchers and teachers concerned with the writing process of native and non-native speakers of English. Scholars of written discourse (Halliday and Hasan, 1976; Grimes, 1977; Dijk, 1977; Beaugrande, 1980) have all made theoretical distinctions between cohesion and coherence. According to Halliday and Hasan's explanation of the concept of text (1976: 18-28), coherence is dependent on the cohesion within the text and the "context of situation". Cohesion within the text concerns the intersentence relationships in the language, which are realized by the writer's choice of syntactic and semantic elements. The "context of situation" refers to the external factors which influence the writer's choice of language. These external factors may be the topic as well as the writer's perception of the potential reader of the text. Likewise, the coherence of a text for a reader depends on the perception of situational and linguistic cues chosen by the writer.

However, Halliday and Hasan (1976: 18-28) point out that a writer can construct a passage which is coherent in a situational and semantic sense for a reader but lacks intersentence cohesion. A writer can also construct a cohesive passage which lacks continuity of meaning in situation and topic for a reader. Those readers who are not able to find an interpretation, either in the intersentence cohesive cues or in the situational elements, unconsciously construct a "context of situation" for the passage based on their own background knowledge of the topic. If the reader is also evaluating a composition in the role of teacher, culturally determined knowledge about a situation provoked by the topic may have an effect on judgment of coherence. Research in reading comprehension has determined that a reader's past experiences seem to have an effect on the perception and retention of information from a written text. For example, in a crosscultural study of reading comprehension of native and non-native speakers of English, greater effects were found for the cultural context of the passages

than for the language complexity for readers of two different cultural backgrounds (Johnson, 1981). Linguistic cues in the passage which were necessary to complete a culturally determined internal representation of the topic and situation were determined by readers to be salient and retained in memory. This internal representation of the topic and situation differs from reader to reader. Consequently, varying interpretations and evaluations of a text by readers in the role of teachers may result.

In addition, teachers' expectations of coherence in discourse may also reflect crosscultural differences in rhetorical forms. For example, after analyzing 600 compositions, Kaplan (1966) concluded that in expository writing "each language and each culture has a paragraph order unique to itself, and part of the learning of a particular language is the mastering of its logical system" (p. 256). Subsequent crosscultural studies in rhetoric have indicated that the internal logic and organization of a text may differ considerably across languages. Thus, rhetorical patterns seem to be determined by both the language and the culture. (See Kaplan, 1983, for a review of this literature.)

Culturally determined experiences in rhetoric may also have an effect on a teacher's evaluation of coherence in compositions. In a contrastive study of upper school essays and of teachers' evaluations of these essays, Clyne (1983) found that form (linearity, relevance, lack of redundancy) is of greater importance in the process of teaching rhetoric and in the

evaluation of compositions in English-speaking than in German-speaking countries. In determining whether norms for judging literary quality are a product of the schooling system, Purves (1973) identified a national style particular to a culture in 14 different countries. Purves and Takala (1982) then examined typical essays written by students in these countries for achievement in writing and its relationship to national style. The results of their study led to the claim (Purves, 1984) that instruction in composition is the acculturation of the student into the "rhetorical community" which has certain norms, expectations, and conventions with respect to writing.

In studies of cohesion in written discourse of native English speakers, both Hartnett (1980) and Witte and Faigley (1981) found that compositions (5) scored high holistically contain more cohesion than those (5) scored low. In addition, Witte and Faigley found that high rated essays contain more lexical collocation than do low rated essays where there is more lexical reiteration. In fact, two thirds of the cohesion in both the low and high rated samples is lexical.

Although Hartnett (1980) concluded that there is no correlation between mode (persuasive and expository) and type or amount of cohesion in English, Tierney and Mosenthal (1981) found that the topic accounts for variation in types of cohesion per essay. Thus, the topic seems to affect the options a writer has for choice of cohesive items. It was also found that the teachers' ratings of coherence in essays is related to the amount of the writer's background knowledge on the topic, instead of cohesive patterning.

Schneider (1985) also examined the use of cohesive devices in essays (30) of native English speakers. Each essay was corrected for either sentence level errors (mechanical and grammatical) or cohesive errors or both. For the essays rated as failing (15), the mean score is significantly lower when the essay version with cohesive errors alone was corrected than when the essays were corrected for both cohesive and sentence level errors. No such differences were found between the holistic ratings of the different versions of the corrections of the essays rated as passing (15). In addition, more cohesion within sentences was found in the passing essays while more cohesion between sentences was found in the failing essays. In both passing and failing essays, reiteration (exact word) and reference (personal and possessive pronouns) make up approximately 50% of the total cohesive devices.

Even though conclusions on the relationship of cohesion and coherence have been contradictory, these studies of cohesion in compositions of native speakers of English seem to indicate that judgments of writing quality must concern overall coherence in content and organization rather than merely quantity of cohesion.

Similar conclusions have been reached in the examination of cohesion in the compositions of ESL writers. However, interesting differences have been found in types of cohesion used by native and non-native speakers of English.

As in the cited studies of compositions of native speakers (Hartnett, 1980; Witte and Faigley, 1981), it has been found that compositions written by non-native speakers of English and holistically scored as high contain more cohesion than low scored papers. Lieber (1980) found that lexical cohesion occurs most often, followed by reference and conjunction to a lesser degree. Anderson (1980) found that there is a tendency to use lexical reiteration and not to use conjunction with little difference in the amount of reference in narratives (22), both written and oral. In a comparison of essays rated qualitatively as high or low of native speakers (2) and of ESL students (4), Connor (1984) found a relatively high frequency (76% to 86%) of lexical cohesion. Even though Connor's sample size was small, the essays of ESL students have high percentages of lexical reiteration with a small amount of lexical collocation, while those of the native speakers tend to have higher levels of collocation and less reiteration. There is also more frequent conjunctive and referential cohesion in the essays of the ESL writers than in those of native speakers of English.

In contrast to the results of the preceding studies, Lindsay (1981) reported only 3% more cohesion in the essays rated qualitatively high (5) than in those rated low (5) of native speakers of English. The ESL essays rated high in quality (5) contain 5.4% less cohesion than those rated low in quality (5) and 2% less cohesion than the essays rated high of the native speakers of English. Both native and non-native English speakers use more reference and conjunction than lexical reiteration. Similar to Connor's study (1984), the percentage of cohesion in essays rated low in quality show more conjunctive and referential cohesion than those rated high in quality for the non-native English speakers and for those rated both low and high in quality for native speakers of English.

Scarcella (1984) found no difference in the use of lexical and referential cohesion for compositions written by native speakers of English who were high (15) or low (15) in language proficiency and for essays written by non-native English speakers who were at the advanced (40) or beginning (40) levels of English. In addition, native English speakers with low language proficiency used significantly more conjunctive cohesion than those with high language proficiency, although no such difference was found for non-native English speakers. Similar to Lindsay's findings (1984), the density of lexical cohesion in the four samples is about the same and much lower than that of conjunctive and referential cohesion.

Although Scarcella (1984) found that the proportion of cohesion varies significantly as a function of the non-native English speaker's first language background (Romance, Taiwanese, Japanese, Korean), no empirical studies on cohesion in written discourse of non-native English speakers include data from the first language (as in studies on contrastive rhetoric or coherence). Control of the language background of ESL writers might aid in comprehension of differences in the use of cohesive elements. Control of the cultural background of the ESL writers might aid in understanding the relationship between the type of cohesive elements and the coherence pattern of rhetorical style used.

For a better understanding of this relationship of cohesion and coherence in written discourse of learners of English, the present study was designed to examine these constructs in the compositions of students from a single language, Malay, and educational background. These compositions are compared with those written in Malay and in English by native speakers of both languages to determine the stage of development in composing in English of the Malay speakers, all learners of English.

Thus, this study is guided by the following questions:

1. What is the relationship between the amount and type of cohesion and coherence patterns in compositions written in Malay and in English by native speakers of both languages?
2. Are the patterns of cohesion and coherence in compositions

written in Malay and in English by native speakers found in compositions written in English by Malaysian learners of English?
DATA COLLECTION

The questions of the study were investigated by an examination of three sample groups of compositions evaluated holistically as "good" or "weak" in quality by three groups of teachers: Malaysian teachers of the Malay language and American teachers of English to native and non-native speakers. The sixty compositions submitted by the three groups of teachers had been marked for errors in mechanics and grammar with comments on the organization of content. In order to determine whether the qualities of "good" and "weak" were viewed similarly, the three groups of teachers were asked to identify the most important elements of language and structure in relation to rhetorical forms. (See questionnaire, Appendix A.)

Although written in different languages and on different topics, the purpose for writing these compositions was the same: to meet the expectations of reader-teachers in an examination situation. All the sample compositions were written under pressure and supervision in a specified time length. The composition sample submitted by the Malaysian teachers consisted of ten "good" and ten "weak" compositions written in the Malay language as part of the final examination in a Malay language secondary school. Malaysian teachers first rated the quality of the compositions of students in their classes. The compositions were then pooled and spot rated by all the teachers to obtain an overall comparative standing. The American teachers submitted two groups of compositions: ten "good" and ten "weak" compositions written by native English speakers and ten "good" and ten "weak" compositions written by Malaysian ESL students (with TOEFL score range of 500 to 525). These compositions were part of an examination to place students in college composition courses. A committee of instructors rated the compositions individually according to a preset scale, and double checking was done in cases of questionable ratings.

COHESION ANALYSIS OF COMPOSITIONS

Method. The analysis of cohesion, adapted from Halliday and Hasan (1976), is based on the concept of the text as a semantic unity

which is dependent on the cohesion between its elements. In order to analyze a text in terms of its cohesive properties and give a systematic account of its patterns of cohesion, Halliday and Hasan (1976) use the term tie to refer to a single instance of a cohesive relation between intervening sentences. How cohesive elements build up a text across sentence boundaries is illustrated by distance or the number of intervening sentences separating the linguistic item from its referent. The following examples from students' compositions illustrate categories of cohesive ties: referential, conjunctive, and lexical.

With reference, the meaning of a linguistic item is specified and interpreted through its referent in the text. Where the interpretation involves identification with a referent, ties include pronouns and demonstratives. (Articles, defined as ties by Halliday and Hasan, were not counted in this study because of the Malaysian students' incorrect use of them in English.) In the following example from a Malaysian ESL student's composition, the demonstrative underlined in the second sentence refers to the preceding sentence and is thus tied to this sentence semantically and syntactically..

Example 1. Living and studying in a foreign country might be frightening. This is true because a student will be far away from home.

In the case where interpretation of a linguistic item is through comparison with a referent, comparative and superlative forms of adjectives as well as other comparative items preceding nouns (e.g., the same, a similar, another, a different and equivalent forms in the Malay language) are counted as ties. The following example from a Malaysian student's composition illustrates a tie through comparison in which the item another refers to a difference pointed out previously in the composition.

Example 2. Another major difference between the two countries is in community development.

Conjunction is cohesive by its semantic relation between two events in a narrative, two steps in an argument, or two continuous passages of a text. Conjunctive ties are connecting words between

sentences (e.g., and, however, consequently, of course, and equivalent forms in Malay). In the following example from a Malaysian ESL student's composition, the use of for example links the first two sentences semantically with the last two sentences. Example 3. Studying in a foreign country is better than studying in one's own country. This statement is true for very good reasons. For example, the USA is well-known for its famous schools and universities. The standard of learning in those established schools is undoubtedly excellent due to the distinguished professors and brilliant students.

There are two aspects of lexical cohesion found in the preceding example: reiteration and collocation. Reiteration is either the repetition of the same item (schools) or the use of a synonym or near-synonym in the context of reference (foreign country and USA). Collocation is the association of a word with another word in the preceding text (e.g., schools, universities, learning, professors, and students in the third and fourth sentences are all associated with studying in the first sentence).

Procedure. Ties or the cohesive relationships between sentences were first identified as referential, conjunctive, or lexical and then counted for each category. Distance or the number of intervening sentences between a linguistic item and its referent was calculated for each tie. This analysis of cohesion was done by three raters (two native English speakers and one native Malay speaker) for the compositions written in English and two raters (one native English speaker and one native Malay speaker) for the compositions written in Malay.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF COHESION

T-tests were performed on the data obtained from the analysis of cohesion. These tests indicate that "good" compositions are not more cohesive than "weak" compositions, either in the number of cohesive items per sentence or per composition, for all three groups. There is also no difference in distance between cohesive items and referents (syntactic and semantic ties) for "good" and "weak" compositions in the three groups. (Tables 1, 2, 3).

(Insert Tables 1, 2, 3 about here.)

Table 1
Mean Frequency of Cohesive Ties Across Compositions^a
in Malay Written by Malaysian Students

	"Good" Compositions (N=10)		"Weak" Compositions (N=10)	
<u>Cohesive Ties</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>
Number per Composition	67.13	57.27	56.25	28.14
Syntactic Ties	14.12	10.94	13.65	11.97
Semantic Ties	*48.56	46.31	38.81	18.45
Reiteration	*45.75	45.43	36.88	18.10
Collocation	6.43	3.91	3.88	2.64
Number per Sentence	.42	.14	.38	.11

Number of Sentences between Cohesive Items and Referents	2.40	1.38	2.62	1.54

*p < .05.

^aCalculated from the total number of cohesive ties in each essay, which were then summed and averaged across all essays in each group.

Table 2
Mean Frequency of Cohesive Ties Across Compositions
in English Written by American Students^a

	"Good" Compositions (N=10)		"Weak" Compositions (N=10)	
<u>Cohesive Ties</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>
Number per Composition	43.70	16.65	31.00	16.62
Syntactic Ties	* 9.88	4.39	4.93	2.32
Semantic Ties	29.45	14.87	22.25	12.52
Reiteration	26.50	15.08	19.40	11.21
Collocation	5.90	4.09	6.33	3.12
Number per Sentence	.37	.11	.42	.12

Number of Sentences between Cohesive Items and Referents	1.92	1.02	1.50	.59

*p < .05.

^aCalculated from the total number of cohesive ties in each essay, which were then summed and averaged across all essays in each group.

Table 3
Mean Frequency of Cohesive Ties Across Compositions
in English Written by Malaysian Students^a

	"Good" Compositions (N=10)		"Weak" Compositions (N=10)	
<u>Cohesive Ties</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>
Number per Composition	57.33	30.95	56.45	44.40
Syntactic Ties	9.65	5.64	10.78	11.53
Semantic Ties	41.22	23.83	41.32	31.09
Reiteration	37.56	23.02	38.36	28.51
Collocation	7.33	3.91	6.50	5.40
Number per Sentence	.43	.12	.59	.59

Number of Sentences between Cohesive Items and Referents	2.80	.67	1.90	1.33

^aCalculated from the total number of cohesive ties in each essay, which were then summed and averaged across all essays in one group.

When cohesive elements are broken down into syntactic ties (reference and conjunction) and semantic ties (reiteration and collocation), similarities are found for amount of density of ties. Semantic ties make up approximately three fourths of the total cohesive ties in both the "good" and "weak" compositions in all three sample groups (Tables 1, 2, 3). When types of semantic ties are considered, reiteration through the repetition of words or the use of synonyms is far greater than collocation through the association of words.

However, the type of cohesive item used varies between compositions written in Malay and those written in English by native speakers of both languages. "Good" compositions in the Malay language have more semantic ties through reiteration of words than "weak" compositions (Table 1). In contrast, a greater use of syntactic ties (conjunction and reference) is found in "good" compositions than in "weak" compositions written in English by native speakers (Table 2). The use of syntactic ties also tends to be more prevalent in "good" than in "weak" compositions written in English by Malaysian ESL students (Table 3).

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Even though it is difficult to make strong generalizations from the analysis of data for such a small sample size, the theoretical distinction between cohesion and coherence in written discourse seems to be supported. The lack of difference in the quantity of cohesion for compositions evaluated as "good" or "weak" suggests that the coherence pattern or the organization of idea units must characterize quality. Variability in the use of type of cohesive item in compositions written in Malay and those written in English by native speakers also seems to be related to the coherence pattern.

As pointed out by Halliday and Hasan (1976: 18-28), coherence patterns tend to be dependent on the topic or "context of situation", the external factors which influence the writer to choose a certain style, vocabulary, and organization of content. The scale for the determination of quality of the compositions was

not controlled for the three groups of Malaysian and American teachers. However, an investigation of teachers' comments on the questionnaire and on the sample compositions compared with the development of content points out that both American and Malaysian teachers stress organization of material with a controlling idea or a thesis development. (See Figure 1.)

(Insert Figure 1 about here.)

However, topics for the compositions in Malay and in English seem to call for differences in the organization of content and in language use. (See lists of topics for the sample compositions, Appendix B.)

Topics of the example essays in the Malay language call for descriptive or persuasive writing. In the analysis of the coherence pattern, descriptions and arguments are developed with the use of opinions and abstract references to the writer's feelings and thoughts. "Good" compositions tend to end with an exaggeration, figurative language, or an exhortation of advice to the reader. (See composition abstracts, Appendix C.) Cohesion analysis indicates that "good" descriptive and persuasive writing in the Malay language tends to demand a greater use of semantic cohesion than compositions evaluated as "weak" (Table 1). Thus, this use of semantic cohesive ties of reiteration and collocation seems to be linked to descriptive or persuasive writing.

Semantic reiteration seems to be primarily done through the use of bahasa berbunga. According to the Malaysian teachers, bahasa berbunga is a style used to convey a mood or to express feelings or to emphasize in essays of description and argumentation. The influence of bahasa berbunga on a Malaysian student's writing in English can be seen in the preceding example from the composition on the benefits of study in America. The writer exaggerates the quality of American universities through the use of such words as famous schools and universities, distinguished professors, and brilliant students.

Topics given by the American teachers elicit expository writing with the use of supporting details and concrete examples, as in the example "good" compositions written by native speakers. The final

FIGURE 1

ELEMENTS OF "GOOD" COMPOSITIONS

MALAYSIAN TEACHERS OF MALAY (N=5)	MALAYSIAN TEACHERS OF ENGLISH (N=5)	AMERICAN TEACHERS OF ESL (N=5)	AMERICAN TEACHERS OF ENGLISH (N=5)
<u>Rhetoric/Organization</u>	<u>Rhetoric/Organization</u>	<u>Rhetoric/Organization</u>	<u>Rhetoric/Organization</u>
1. logical development	1. flow between sentences	1. sequence of ideas	1. clear organization
2. sequence of ideas	2. paragraph level transitions	2. paragraph development (intro, body, conclusion)	2. idea development
3. transitions	3. sequence of ideas	3. idea development	3. unity/continuity
	4. idea development	4. transitions	4. examples, support details
		5. support statements	5. paragraph development (intro, body, conclusion)
<u>Semantics/Language</u>	<u>Semantics/Language</u>	<u>Semantics/Language</u>	<u>Semantics/Language</u>
use of appropriate language	1. varied ways of expression	1. stylistic variation/ complexity of structure	1. language facility
	2. direct language	2. fluent expression	2. good diction
		3. vocabulary usage	3. stylistic variation/ complexity of structure
<u>Grammar/Mechanics</u>	<u>Grammar Mechanics</u>	<u>Grammar/Mechanics</u>	<u>Grammar Mechanics</u>
grammatical/syntactic accuracy	grammatical/syntactic accuracy	grammatical/syntactic accuracy	grammatical/syntactic accuracy
<u>Content</u>	<u>Content</u>	<u>Content</u>	<u>Content</u>
topic accuracy			originality

Note: Elements are summarized from the teachers' responses to the questionnaire and listed in descending order of frequency.

general summary is a reiteration of ideas introduced at the beginning and/or a restatement of the thesis. (See composition abstracts, Appendix C.) Analysis of cohesion in the essays written in English by native speakers indicates that "good" expository writing tends to call for a greater use of syntactic ties, conjunctive and referential, than "weak" compositions (Table 2). Thus, the use of syntactic cohesive ties of conjunction and reference seems to be linked to expository writing.

Compositions written in English by Malay speakers seem to exemplify a developmental stage in the use of language and in the organization of content. (See composition abstracts, Appendix C.) Although the topics should have elicited expository writing, coherence patterns found in the "good" expository essays of native speakers of English and in the "good" descriptive essays in Malay can be identified in the essays written by the Malaysian learners of English. In the example "weak" composition, the topic is not limited in the first paragraph, as in the "good" compositions written by native speakers of English and Malay. Although the topic should have elicited expository writing, there is a series of opinions without supporting details which develop the thesis statement with a final exhortation to the reader, as in the "good" compositions written in Malay. There is a greater density of semantic ties in these compositions, as in the compositions written in Malay, than in those written in English by native speakers. However, there is no difference in type of cohesive item for "good" and "weak" compositions (Table 3). Thus, these writers seem to be in transition from writing argumentative or descriptive compositions with a greater use of semantic ties in the Malay language to expository writing with a greater use of syntactic ties in English.

Aspects of the pedagogical situation must be considered in drawing conclusions about the relationship of cohesion and coherence in compositions written for academic purposes in different languages and cultures. Both Malaysian and American teachers stress the importance of a controlling idea or thesis development, as exemplified in "good" compositions in all three

groups. However, the teaching of composition in the Malaysian school system seems to be oriented towards argumentative and descriptive writing and in American education, towards expository writing. This difference in educational goals was not only reflected in the teachers' choice of topic for composition and in the evaluations but also confirmed through interviews with Malaysian students. As the most frequent means for connecting sentences in all three sample groups of compositions is lexical cohesion, vocabulary development through the building of background knowledge to which these topics refer seems of primary importance in teaching composition.

Further research could confirm and extend the results of this exploratory study. The topic effect on cohesion and coherence patterns as indicated in this study could be revealed by an analysis of variance if the sample groups were larger. In addition, all subjects could be asked to write two compositions, one on a topic eliciting descriptive/persuasive writing and another on a topic eliciting expository writing. Then, notwithstanding the language in which the compositions were written, semantic ties may be found to be typical of descriptive/persuasive writing and syntactic ties typical of expository writing. Examination of essays in the Malay language of the learners of English in this study could have also indicated the existence of a rhetorical style or coherence patterns already developed in the Malay language and transferred to compositions in English. Further research could also determine if the developmental stage in expository writing of the language learners in this study is characteristic of all student writers, native or non-native speakers of English.

This study suggests that "good" compositions seem to depend on the demands of the topic which determines coherence or rhetorical organization and cohesion or language use. Thus, successful writing is determined by a reader-teacher who understands and evaluates a composition through a knowledge of the world to which the topic of the composition refers as well as a familiarity with the linguistic and rhetorical characteristics of "good" discourse learned through experiences in writing and teaching rhetoric.

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APPENDIX A

Questionnaire for all three groups of teachers:

1. What kinds of rhetorical forms do you teach in composition?
2. What elements of structure or language are most important in communicating these rhetorical forms? Please identify by marking these elements in the sample "good" and "weak" compositions.

APPENDIX B

Topics for compositions written in the Malay language:

Argumentation:

Gambling is a bad habit.

The role of police.

The misuse of drugs.

The importance of magazines and newspapers as a way of life.

Interpretation of a proverb:

If you are courageous, you are right. If you are scared, you are wrong.

Description of a situation:

You are on a bus and suddenly the bus stops and everyone is surprised.

Scenery by the seaside by dusk.

Topics for compositions written in the English language:

English for native speakers:

Definition - A problem in society that concerns you.

Classification - The easiest things for you to do.

Comparison/contrast - My life will be different from that of my parents.

Synthesis - The most important technological invention of the past twenty years.

English for non-native speakers:

Comparison/contrast - Differences or similarities between your country and the USA.

Analysis - Arguments for/against study in a foreign country.

Synthesis - My first day in the USA.

APPENDIX C

Abstract of an example good composition written in the Malay language:

Topic: Gambling is a bad habit.

1. Thesis statement: Gambling is a bad habit which should be avoided by anyone who wants to succeed in life.
 - a. negative elements
 - b. examples of gambling
 - c. practice in Malaysia
2. The role of parents in giving proper religious education.
 - a. emphasis on values and adequate and responsible socialization of children
 - b. development of bad habits when proper upbringing is neglected
3. Effects of gambling as an increase of:
 - a. instability in society
 - b. domestic strife c. robberies
 - d. extortion bids
 - e. constant fear in life of citizens
4. Gambling is a waste in money, time, and energy which should be redirected to socially beneficial areas exemplified by saving money for investment and/or building mosques.

Abstract of an example weak composition written in the Malay language:

Topic: Gambling is a bad habit.

1. Thesis statement: There are many bad habits practiced by Malaysians.
2. History of gambling.
3. Effects of gambling: degradation of moral and religious values.
4. The King's move to ban gambling among Moslems.

Abstract of an example good composition written in the English language by a native speaker:

Topic: My life will be different from that of my parents.

1. Examples of qualities of writer's parents

Thesis statement: However, I find myself differing from them in two distinct ways: religious practice and matters of money.

2. Differences in religious practice.
3. Differences in matters of money.
4. How wonderful my parents are, even though my life will be different.

Abstract of an example weak composition written in English by a native speaker:

Topic: My life will be different from that of my parents.

1. Differences in parents' educational level, occupations, and age of marriage contrasted with my desire for a higher level of education to guarantee career opportunity and financial security before marriage.
2. Desire to be a friend and counselor to my children and to assume responsibility for their welfare.

An example good composition written in English by a Malay speaker:

I opened my eyes to the darkness of the early dawn. "I am in the US", I remembered quickly. It was only five o'clock but I could sleep no longer. My body was telling me it was not time to sleep. It was evening in my country halfway across the world. Later in the first rays of the sun, I could see the white snow falling down past my window. I could not believe that it was really cold outside, so I went out to the lawn without my winter jacket. That was the last time I was outside the house without a jacket on. After what seemed to be a surprisingly common breakfast, I explored the house which was to be my home for the next 14 months. It was a pleasant, warm and simple home. I walked down the street to my new school. I couldn't help stopping to feel the pure white snow. It was a strange feeling to feel my feet sink into the snow as I walked. It was an entirely new and different experience when I had

a snowball fight with my foster brother that evening. I was panting heavily by the time I escaped into the house from those hard and fast coming snowballs. When the sky turned dark that evening, I felt hungry. I began to wonder when supper time was until I discovered it was only four o'clock in the evening. That day was the beginning of a pleasant adventure in the beautiful land of America.

Abstract of an example weak composition in English by a Malay speaker:

Topic: Major differences between your country and the USA.

1. Malaysia, a democratic country.

Thesis statement: There are many differences between Malaysia and the USA.

2. Description of location, size, and population of Malaysia.

3. Description of climate and weather of Malaysia.

4. Description of food in Malaysia.

5. Description of culture (dance, clothing, manners) in Malaysia.

6. Despite these differences, we must remember that Malaysia and the USA have many similarities which enable the two countries to life in peace with each other.